E·MYSTERY·OF·THE ·BY·THE·SHORE

BY
Florence Warden,
Author of "The House on the Marsh," etc.

[Copyright, 1895, by Robert Bonner's Sons.]

CHAPTER XVIII.
Continued.

It was about eight o'clock that night en they learned that a schooner had e ashore in the bay itself, within ile of the inn. She had lost her ering-gear in the storm, and the ce of the wind had driven her upon e sands at the edge of the marsh. It as high tide when the disaster hapned, but it was thought that the ip was in no danger of breaking up, d that her crew would all be got off safety as the tide went down. The fe-boat from Courtstairs was already its way to the wrecked vessel when e news came to the inn.

Through the snow, which the wind lew straight into their faces, Nell nd half a dozen of her neighbors ade their way across the marsh, the en carrying ropes and lanterns and e women restoratives for the half-frozen crew. It was a long and weary mile. The ground was hard with frost, the snowdrifts were already getting deep; the flares set burning from time to time by the crew of the wrecked ship flickered uncannily in the darkness whenever the snow ceased for a short time.

But the journey was not a fruitless one. The men of the party, seafarers themselves for the most part, and all used to the sea, succeeded, up to their waists in water, in launching a boat and bringing the crew safely to land.

The men were so benumbed by the cold that they had to be helped along as they limped and stumbled over the snow to the inn. There, however, they were soon restored through the kindly offices of a host of willing hands.

Every creature in the neighborhood had heard, by this time, of the unusual event of a ship wrecked in their own bay, and it was through quite a large crowd that the sailors made their way into the little Blue Lion.

Even Mrs. Lansdowne, the wife of the most prominent country gentleman of the neighborhood, had heard of the new excitement, and had driven over, having picked up the colonel and Miss Bostal on her way. On hearing that there was little hope of saving the schooner, and that in any case the sailors would lose their kit, Mrs. Lansdowne put into George Claris's hands, for the benefit of the men, a sum of money which at once became the starting point of a collection, to which most of the crowd contributed something. Even the colonel, whose poverty was proverbial, gave a shilling, although his daughter watched his hand with anxious eyes as he volunteered the coin. Altogether between five and six pounds was collected; and George Claris tied the money up in a canvas bag, and locked it up in the till behind the bar. There were whispers in the crowd that George Claris's house was not the safest place in the world to keep money in, but even the whisperers had no doubt of the honesty of Claris himself, while many were even glad of the opportunity of showing their confidence in a man who had undoubtedly been for some time under a cloud.

It was Nell, however, who watched this proceeding with the deepest anxiety. Her agitation was so evident, as she stood just within the doorway which led from the bar to the back of the inn, staring at her uncle, that one or two of the crowd looked at each other significantly. Suddenly the girl took a few rapid steps forward and touched the innkeeper's arm.

"Uncle," said she, in a low voice, "Uncle George, wouldn't it be better to send the money into Stroan by—" She glanced at the men who were crowding in, and noticed one of the tradesmen of the town, "by Mr. Paramor?"

Her uncle frowned, and Mr. Paramor shook his head, with the kindly intention of showing George Claris that his friends were on his side.

"No, no, Miss Claris, leave it where it is, where it'll be ready to hand," said he.

As Nell drew back, without a word, but with a curious look of constraint and trouble on her face, a little figure appeared at the door, and in her prim tones Miss Bostal, whom no emergency could induce to step over the threshhold of an inn, called to her:

"Nell, Nell, come out here, and speak to me."

Nell looked at her, hesitated, and was on the point of disappearing into the interior of the house, when Meg, who was passing towards the bar-parlor, with a tray full of hot drinks, officiously dragged her forward with one strong hand, while she carefully balanced the glasses on the tray with the ot[illegible]

[illegible] Theodora, don't you see, [illegible] in a loud whis- [illegible] that [illegible] in- [illegible] entertainment was an ex- [illegible] being given in honor of [illegible]" of Otto Conybeare's [illegible] the mines laid for [illegible] cessful.

[illegible] ouse, however, [illegible] pretty one [illegible] himself [illegible] ying to [illegible] and [illegible] and [illegible]

was hardly sufficient protection against the falling snow.

"You had better get into the carriage, Miss Theodora," suggested Nell, coldly, ignoring the lady's question.

"But I want an answer first, my dear. Never mind the snow. I only shiver because I am not used to the night air. You know I never go out after sundown, and not often before."

But Nell would give her no answer. And Miss Theodora, when she was at last constrained to get into the carriage then, regretted to Mrs. Lansdowne that London had spoiled her dear little girl.

It was now past closing time at the inn, and George Claris, with great difficulty, was clearing his house of its crowd of customers. Those three of the sailors who had suffered most from cold and exposure were to spend the night under his roof, while the rest were taken to Stroan by newfound friends who offered them hospitality. George Claris locked up his house, having already sent his niece and Meg to bed; and, thoroughly tried out, went up to his own room.

He had had a very hard day, and he had finished up with an extra glass of rum and water. The consequence was that he fell off to sleep as soon as he sat down on the edge of his bed to take his boots off, and did not wake up until some hours later, when he sat up suddenly, and remembered, at the moment of waking, that he had forgotten to take the money, both his own takings, and the collection for the sailors, out of the till in the bar.

Opening the door of his room softly, in order not to disturb the sleepers, he went down stairs.

It was half past five on the following morning when the nearest neighbors were startled by a loud knocking at their door, followed by the abrupt inrush of Meg, the inn servant, in a state of frantic excitement.

"Oh, come, some of ye; do come! There's been awful doings in our house!" she cried, scarcely articulate between her fright and want of breath. "There's somebody hiding in the bar, and I can't get him out; and Mr. Claris is nowhere to be found; and Miss Nell's fainted when I told her; and, oh, dear, do come!"

The woman whom she was addressing was at first too much alarmed to come; but two men, who were not far off, hearing the commotion, offered to go back with Meg, and in a few minutes the whole party were at the inn.

There was somebody behind the bar, certainly—somebody down on the floor. The men stood hesitating at the door. The sounds which came to their ears from behind the bar were more like the gruntings and growlings of a beast than the voice of a man.

"It's not a man you've got there. It's an animal," said one of the men.

And shouldering the pitchfork he was carying, he made a dash into the building.

But as he entered, a wild figure sprang up from behind the bar and faced the intruder, glaring and raging. It seized one of the earthenware jugs which stood on a shelf against the wall, and brandishing it above his head, gave forth an unearthly howl.

"Who is it? What is it?" screamed Meg.

"Stand back! stand back!" roared the creature, stamping and whirling its arms about. "Stand back! I won't be robbed! I'll serve you as I've served it—as I've served the devil! the devil! the devil!"

And with more stamping, more shouting, the creature hurled the jug, aiming at the head of the intruder.

It was dashed into a thousand pieces against the door, which shook and rattled under the blow.

"Why, it's—it's George Claris himself!" faltered the second man, who kept outside, too much alarmed to go beyond the door.

"Master?" cried Meg, indignantly. "Why, he don't drink! He's as sober a man as there is in the place!"

She was sobbing, and trembling, and clinging to the man.

"He ain't drunk," replied the man shortly. "He's gone mad, my girl. Look at his eyes."

And as the girl looked fearfully through the window at her unhappy master, she could not doubt the truth of the man's words.

At eleven o'clock on the previous night George Claris had been as sane as any in the country. At six o'clock in the morning he was a raving madman.

CHAPTER XIX.

It was about a month after the shipwreck which brought such strange consequences to the Blue Lion and its inmates that Clifford King, much against his will, found himself, for the first time that winter, at a dance. He detested dancing, never accepted an invitation to a ball if he could help it, never turned up if he found himself called to accept.

"Now," [illegible] "I shall get to the bottom [illegible] mystery." For he had had no opportunity of getting hold of Otto, or of any one who could tell him who she was. Otto came straight toward him.

"I want to introduce you to Miss Lansdowne," said he.

Lansdowne! The name was quite unfamiliar to Clifford. But as soon as he was introduced the puzzle came to pieces.

"I wanted so much to know you, Mr. King," said the girl, who was pleasant, unaffected and amiable-looking. "I can see you don't know me, and yet I know you very well."

"That is not quite fair," said Clifford. "I do remember your face perfectly well; it is your name only which is unfamiliar to me. I am certain I have never spoken to you in my life; you may be sure I should not have forgotten if I had."

"I live near Stroam," said Miss Lansdowne.

Clifford started, and his face clouded.

"I have often seen you about there," went on the girl, "and I know intimately more than one of your friends there."

"I have no friends there now," said Clifford, with a sudden change to grave bitterness in his voice and manner.

"Well, you had friends there at one time, I think. Miss Bostal and her father, the Colonel, would, I am sure, be rather hurt to know that you no longer reckoned them as your friends."

"The Bostals! Oh, yes," answered Clifford, indifferently. "I know them, but Miss Bostal would hardly reckon me as a friend. I lost my place in her esteem, if I ever had any, by walking from Courtstairs to Stroam on a Sunday in a tourist's suit."

Miss Lansdowne smiled.

"She is an odd little creature," she said, "but she has a very good heart. To hear her deplore the disappearance of a young girl whom she was fond of and kind to," and Miss Lansdowne looked steadily away from Clifford as she spoke, "no one could doubt the depth of her feelings."

Clifford was silent for a few moments. Then he glanced at the face of the girl beside him, saw that it invited confidence, and guessed that her last words had been carefully chosen.

"You mean that Miss Claris has disappeared?"

"Yes. You had heard about it, I suppose?" she asked, with a pretense of indifference.

"Of course."

"And that nobody knows more than this—that she and her uncle have gone away?"

Clifford answered, with scarcely a pretense on his side of concealing the emotion he felt:

"I went down to the place myself, saw the house shut up, deserted, and found that nobody could tell me more than this—that George Claris had gone mad, and that he was in an asylum; and that his niece had gone away at the same time. If you can tell me anything more, I shall be very grateful to you."

"I don't know any more than you do. One can only guess—or repeat the guesses of others."

"Well, let me hear the guesses."

"They say—people think—that the girl has been shut up, too."

"In an asylum?" asked Clifford, hardly able to control his voice.

"Yes."

"I don't believe it!" said he, hoarsely.

"Well, isn't it better than believing—anything else?"

"Believing—that she is a thief, a—" Clifford could not go on.

"Do you know what happened on that morning when George Claris was found mad?" asked Miss Lansdowne, abruptly.

"The woman at the nearest cottage told me the story," he answered, shortly.

"Did she tell you—" Miss Lansdowne hesitated—"that Miss Claris fainted when they told her what had happened to her uncle, and that they found under her pillow—a canvas bag containing the money collected for some shipwrecked sailors the night before?"

Clifford's face changed.

"No," said he at once, in the tone of a man who has made up his mind on some weighty point, "they did not tell me that."

"It is true, though. After that, who could doubt the girl's guilt?"

"I could," said Clifford, quietly.

"And one other person—Miss Bostal. And you are both equally unreasonable."

To be Continued.

How About the Merry Maskers?

How often do we hear the cry, "It is only the Latin races who possess the true spirit of the masquerade." With it goes the kindred complaint, "Anglo-Saxons are too cold to enter into the true spirit of the masquerade."

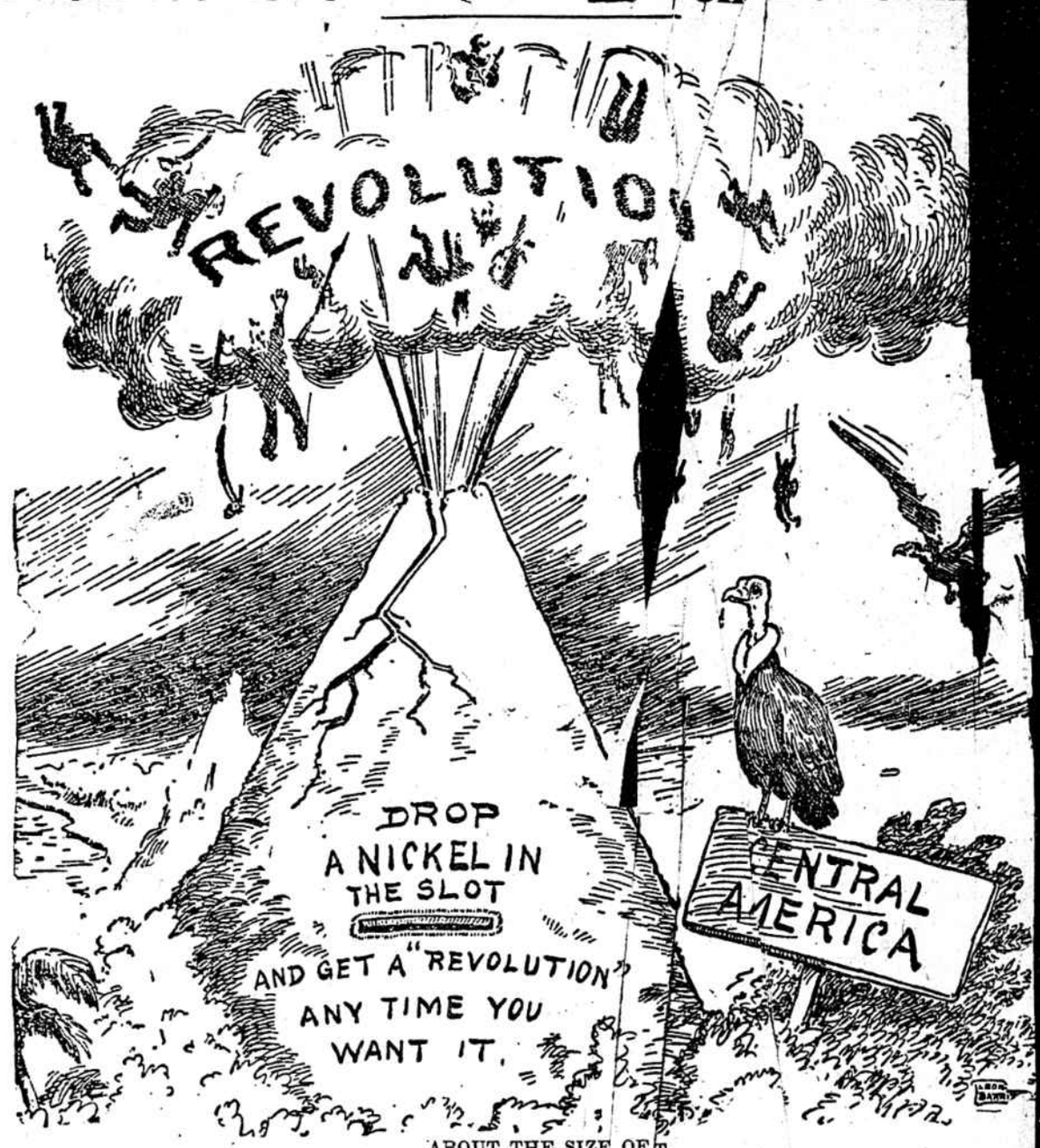
But what is "the true spirit of the masquerade?" I have sought for it vainly. I have even failed to find it in full efflorescence among the Latins. In Latin countries the carnival is declining. Where it still prevails among them it seems to be kept up for commercial reasons. Where it has been imported into Anglo-Saxon countries, it blends with our civilization about as fitly as does a white flour-sack patch on a miner's blue overalls.

Was the carnival always such a merry, merry time? Were there no thin-legged men in the days of doublet and hose? Were there aforetime no ladies afflicted with fatty degeneration of the ankles? Did nobody get drunk? Were there no fights? Did the men who got slugged by merry maskers hit back? Or did they turn the other cheek? Was there any lock-up? Did the lock-up get full? And how about the merry maskers?—Argonaut.

Cultivate a Sense of Humor.

If you are fortunate enough to have even the germ of a sense of humor, cherish that carefully. It is the very salt and savor of life. Learn to smile [illegible] the foibles of your friends, loving [illegible] none the less, but more, because [illegible] r little weaknesses. Do not [illegible] ple too seriously, and, above [illegible] take yourself too seriously. [illegible] an atom in an incompre- [illegible] e, after all. Why find [illegible] brief moment with [illegible] your side?

A Cartoonist's Idea of [illegible]e on the Isthm



ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT.

—From the New York Tribune.

Wonderful Brain Work.

Mail Clerks' Memories Heavily Taxed

MILLIONS of people are complaining nowadays of being taxed financially, but an army of men in the employ of Uncle Sam are burdened with a mental practice unheard of, as regards extent, in any other country of the world.

Things that a railway postal clerk must remember have increased in such volume that one would think every cell of his brain would be filled with the name of a postoffice or railway connection, and the wonder is that the clerk's mind does not falter under the pressure. Despite these facts cases of insanity among this class of public servants are rare.

One Chicago postal clerk maintained for several years a record of 21,000 cards (which take the place of letters in examinations) with an average per cent. of correct distribution of a fraction over ninety-nine per cent. He knew how to reach that many offices in several States by the shortest, quickest route, and he knew the correct location of each office in its State.

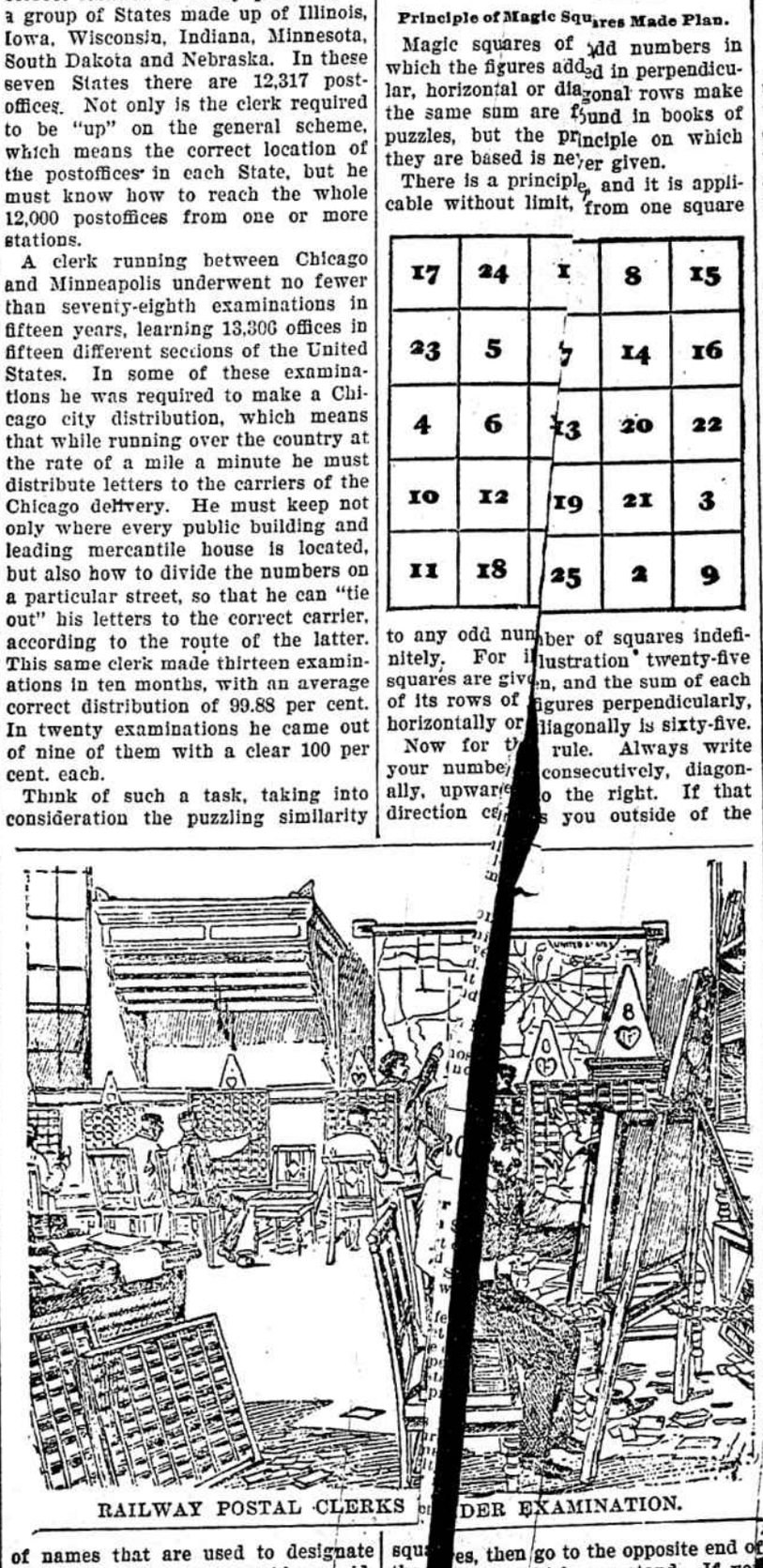
A clerk on the New York and Chicago Railway postoffice must know the correct location of every postoffice in a group of States made up of Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, Minnesota, South Dakota and Nebraska. In these seven States there are 12,317 postoffices. Not only is the clerk required to be "up" on the general scheme, which means the correct location of the postoffices in each State, but he must know how to reach the whole 12,000 postoffices from one or more stations.

A clerk running between Chicago and Minneapolis underwent no fewer than seventy-eighth examinations in fifteen years, learning 13,306 offices in fifteen different sections of the United States. In some of these examinations he was required to make a Chicago city distribution, which means that while running over the country at the rate of a mile a minute he must distribute letters to the carriers of the Chicago delivery. He must keep not only where every public building and leading mercantile house is located, but also how to divide the numbers on a particular street, so that he can "tie out" his letters to the correct carrier, according to the route of the latter. This same clerk made thirteen examinations in ten months, with an average correct distribution of 99.88 per cent. In twenty examinations he came out of nine of them with a clear 100 per cent. each.

Think of such a task, taking into consideration the puzzling similarity of names that are used to designate postoffices. Then, too, must be considered the fact that there are hundreds of cases where in each State is a postoffice of the same name. For instance, in the States named above there are five p[illegible]med Hamilton, six [illegible], four [illegible]evas, four Smithvilles, four Spartas and five Jeffersons and so on. In some instances there is a postoffice in each of the seven States. As one may imagine, this often tends to confuse the average mind.

Periodically the clerks are examined at railway mail headquarters. Packs of cards, each card bearing the name of a postoffice, are furnished a candidate for examination. He takes a position in front of a case of pigeon holes labeled with the name of different railway postoffices throughout the country. He "throws" the cards, distributing them to proper routes, just as he would packages in a postal car. After he finishes the examiner goes over the cards and charges up the errors the clerk has made and gives him his percentage of correct distribution. The clerk is also examined on general and "standpoint" or station schemes at different times.

It is asserted at railway mail service headquarters that there are clerks who have reached the capacity of their minds in the matter of remembering names. They now remember so many that it would be absolutely impossible to learn another State or part of a State. It would seem that of the millions of cells in their brain machinery none are left to fill, all having been taken up in the prosecution of the exacting duties imposed by their occupation.—Chicago Record-Herald.



RAILWAY POSTAL CLERKS [illegible]DER EXAMINATION.

Principle of Magic Squares Made Plain.

Magic squares of odd numbers in which the figures added in perpendicular, horizontal or diagonal rows make the same sum are found in books of puzzles, but the principle on which they are based is never given.

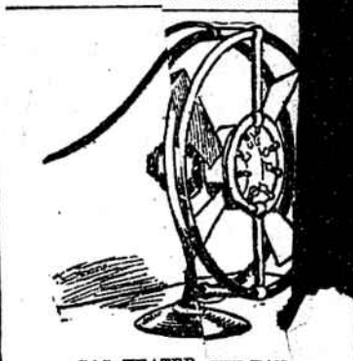
There is a principle, and it is applicable without limit, from one square to any odd number of squares indefinitely. For illustration twenty-five squares are given, and the sum of each of its rows of figures perpendicularly, horizontally or diagonally is sixty-five.

17	24	1	8	15
23	5	7	14	16
4	6	13	20	22
10	12	19	21	3
11	18	25	2	9

Now for the rule. Always write your numbers consecutively, diagonally, upward to the right. If that direction carries you outside of the square, then go to the opposite end of the row at which you stand. If you find a square that is occupied, or the right hand corner, then drop below the last one used, instead of above, as before. Begin with the centre square. Now t[illegible]—Herald.

Circulates Warm Air.

Most people put away their electric fans in the fall, thinking they will have no further use for them until the warm weather arrives in the spring, but we saw here a simple arrangement which makes it possible to utilize the electric fan for blowing heat as well as cool air. It is the invention of Edwin [illegible] Portor, and can be used to heat rooms and offices when there is a gas jet handy. It also forces the air in circulation about the room instead of allowing it to remain stale and dead all day. In this apparatus the frame or guard which surrounds the blades of the fan is of hollow ring, and is connected with a gas jet by a rubber tube. The frame is perforated at intervals the gas is ignited as it flows from the openings, the resultant heat being driven through the room by the action of the fan blades. The inventor designs the heater especially for attachment

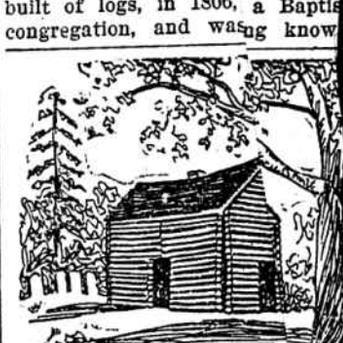


GAS HEATER AND THE FAN.

to any thermo-electric fan, which runs solely with the aid of the heat generating its own current for rotating the fan, but the frame can be readily attached to any electric fan without the expense.

Historic Place of Worship.

It has been ascertained that the first Protestant church erected west of the Mississippi River is still standing, near Jackson, Cape Girardeau County, Mo., being used now as a barn. It was built of logs, in 1806, a Baptist congregation, and was known



ONCE A CHURCH, NOW A [illegible]

as Bethel Church, having for years the distinction of being the house of Protestant worship west of the river. Rev. David Green, a native of Virginia, was its pastor until his death, in 1809. The Louisiana (Mo.) Times suggests that the building be moved to St. Louis and made a feature of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

Street Aid in Accidents.

The municipal authorities of [illegible] are experimenting with a unique street equipment for rendering prompt aid to the injured. It is described as being like a letter box pillar, and contains a folding stretcher, a few medicines, bandages, etc. In order to get at these objects it is necessary to break the glass, as when "calling" a fire engine. In this way the key of the case gains access to a telephone inside communicating the ambulance service at once obtained. This would obviate at once the necessity of hunting up a telephone and a policeman, in order to give aid to a case of accident where now necessary.

A Power in Town Building.

A newspaper whose columns flow with ads. of business men has more influence in attracting people to, and building up, a city, [illegible] than any other agency that [illegible]